

**Questions and Answers from the Bankruptcy Group Discussion**  
**11/4/02 11:15am - 12 noon (Maggie Bondi, Facilitator)**

- Q. 1 What is HR's role in the management decision-making process in your court/office, e.g., recruitment, resolving employee problems, setting policy. If one is not already part of the professional management team, what can one do to become part of it?
- A. 1 Human Resources personnel's role is to serve as coaches and advisers to management. They add a balanced perspective, consistency and assurance. They lend experience and are more emotionally removed from the situations. They are a necessary part of the "management team", even though their titles and CL rating may not necessarily reflect a "management" position.
- Q. 2 Has "working in teams" worked in your court/office? Advantages and disadvantages? Suggestions for making it work better?
- A. 2 Larger courts tended to have "teams" and it worked quite well. No disadvantages stated. The main advantage was that because of the "delegation of duties", management was assured (and relieved) that necessary HR functions were being handled by capable HR personnel and that management wasn't overwhelmed with trying to do it all for so many employees. In smaller courts, management was insecure and uncomfortable in allowing input from HR personnel and they were unable or reluctant to delegate, or in some instances, include HR personnel in some/all HR functions. HR personnel felt that they are capable, and there should be no difference because of court size. Court managers, i.e. Unit Executives, Clerks of Court, Chief Deputies need to be educated so that they understand that HR personnel have specialized expertise- whether it be from hands on experience or formal education. These managers should fully support and "back" their HR personnel.
- Q. 3 Any good training and trainers to meet our needs? How about administrative support staff training? Which program?
- A. 3 The FJC offers good broadcasts on the FJTN. All of the past A.O sponsored training (CPS, EEO/EDR, HR etc.) have been very informative and we hope they continue. The Circuit has also offered many great workshops (like the HR Conference), as well as TSP retirement training from Holly . NARFE (National Assn. Retired Federal Employee) puts out a lot of useful information as well. The Thrift Board offers a great 2 ½ day in-depth training that would be beneficial to all HR professionals.
- Q. 4 Should we coordinate/meet more regularly with other HR's in district to share resources and ideas? Should we establish a Ninth Circuit chat room so we can discuss common issues further or share tips in managing our programs?

A. 4 No, we should not meet with in district non-bankruptcy agencies. We could possibly share costs for workshops with a common thread such as TSP, but should otherwise stay separate. Court Ops exchange is quite useful, not sure if we need a “chat room”? Need to have our own annual HR Conference for HR personnel only, not managers.

Q. 5 Are there generic appointment letters, vacancy announcements, benefit sheets, position descriptions etc. that we can share? What other programs/procedures can we share?

A. 5 Yes, we already share usually by email; appointment, vacancies, position descriptions are solicited and shared. \*\* Everyone in this group felt a need for the Circuit to create a position for a “coordinator/representative”, sort of like a liaison for the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit for OWCP related claims/issues.

Q. 6 What’s the most effective HR program in your court/office and what makes it so?

A. 6 Employee recognition programs, bonuses, flex time, intranet web sites and leave tracking systems were all mentioned as extremely beneficial.